



Opera Ireland

MEMBERS' MAGAZINE - SPRING SEASON 2004

THE SLOW BIRTH OF A MASTERPIECE

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DUNNE WINNER SINGS TOSCA

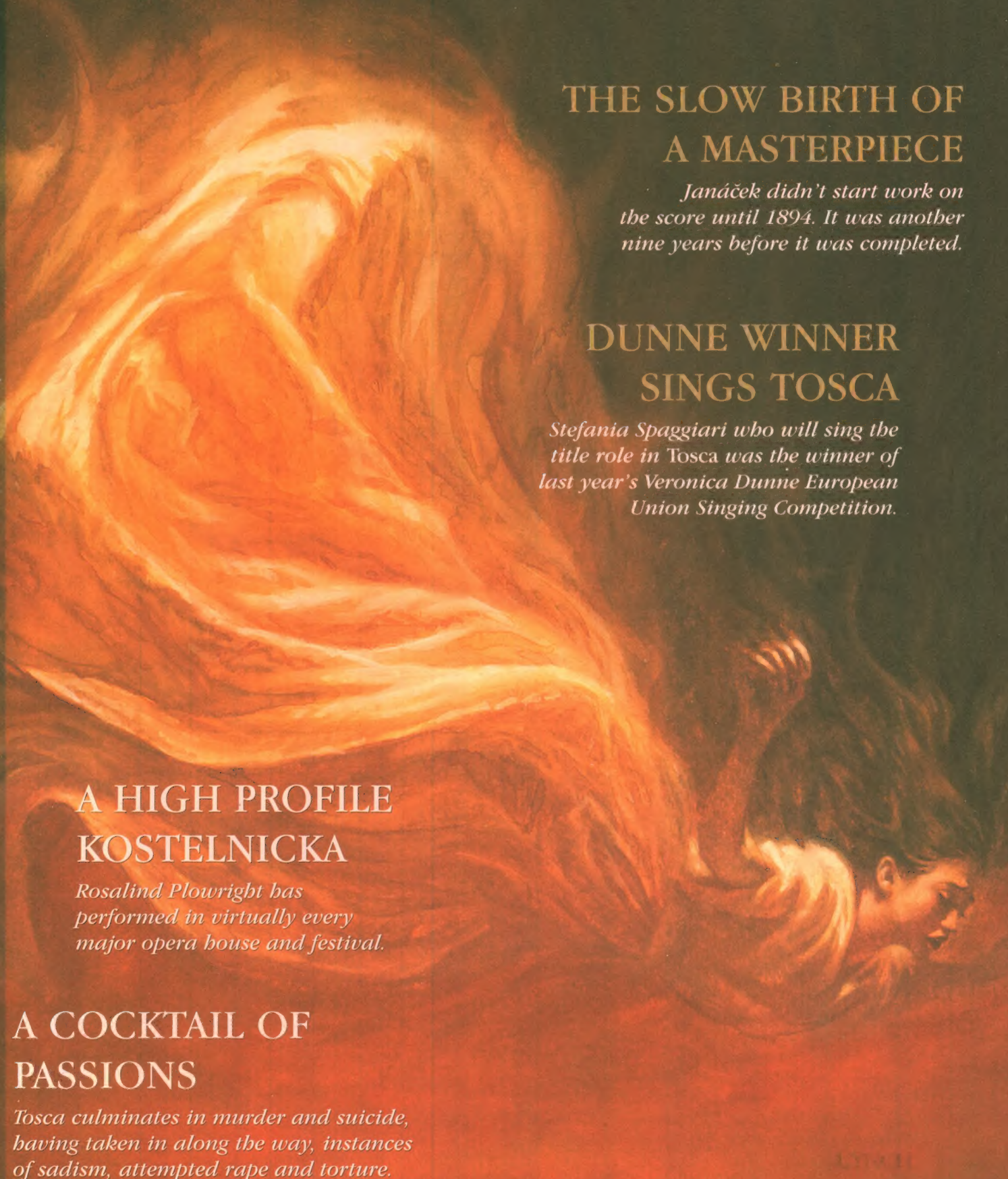
Stefania Spaggiari who will sing the title role in Tosca was the winner of last year's Veronica Dunne European Union Singing Competition.

A HIGH PROFILE KOSTELNICKA

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A COCKTAIL OF PASSIONS

Tosca culminates in murder and suicide, having taken in along the way, instances of sadism, attempted rape and torture.





Dear Members,
2004 is an exciting year for Opera Ireland.

It heralds a return to four fully-staged productions, including new co-producing relationships with Austria, Latvia and the Czech Republic. In addition, we have been invited to take part in celebrations in Latvia on May 1st to coincide with that country's accession to the European Union. In the summer we will return to Limerick for our young singers' Masterclass series – now in its sixth successful year – and in tandem will co-produce a children's opera with 'Summer Music on the Shannon'.

In order to effectively manage this programme we have restructured and strengthened our administrative team by creating two new posts of Development Director and Artistic Administrator.

We have given ourselves stretching targets to increase the number of members, across all levels, in 2004. We are making the various schemes more attractive by adding greater benefits such as a group health scheme and our newly-formed travel club.

Whilst the Company is in good financial health, we still need to earn over €1 million from box office, sponsorships and subscriptions each year. Consequently your support and contribution to the organisation has never been more necessary or indeed more valued.

In the months ahead, and in tandem with other stakeholders, we will commence discussions with the Arts Council on a strategic plan for the advancement of opera in Ireland. This very welcome initiative will ensure the future development of the art form on a national basis.

I do hope you enjoy our productions in the coming year.

David Collopy
Chief Executive



Dear Friends,

We are happy to announce that Opera Ireland is now in a position to offer you four fully-staged operas in 2004. For our spring season we will produce two of the most dramatic, passionate and theatrical operas, both of strong and unforgettable melodic pieces, Puccini's *TOSCA* and Janáček's *JENUFA*.

The title role in *Tosca* will be sung by the young Italian soprano Stefania Spaggiari, the winner of last year's Dr. Veronica Dunne Singing Competition. The Chilean tenor Mario Diaz sings Cavaradossi and Marcel Vanaud, the Belgian baritone who sang Amonasro and Gerard with Opera Ireland, is back to sing Scarpia. Alexander Anissimov is conducting the RTÉ Concert Orchestra in this co-production with the theatre in Klagenfurt, Austria.

After her triumph as Katya Kabanova with Opera Ireland, Franzita Whelan returns in the title role of *Jenůfa*. The worldwide renowned singer Rosalind Plowright sings Kostelnicka. Laurent Wagner will conduct this co-production between Opera Ireland, the National Opera Prague and the Latvian National Opera in Riga.

To celebrate Latvia's entry into the European Union on May 1st, we have been invited to perform *L'altro Mondo* in Riga. *L'altro Mondo*, a fusion of opera and dance music, was created by Opera Ireland in 2001 and is aimed at introducing a younger audience to opera. Since 2001, *L'altro Mondo* has been successfully performed at various locations.

Opera is a wonderful, complex and complete art form and I hope you will continue to tell your friends that a night at the opera is an amazing, thrilling and fulfilling experience!

We look forward to seeing you at our forthcoming productions of *Tosca* and *Jenůfa*.

Dieter Kaegi
Artistic Director



Spring 2004

Performances

TOSCA

Giacomo Puccini

Dates: April 17, 19, 21, 23 & 25

Venue: Gaiety Theatre, Dublin

Performance Times: 7.30pm

Co-production with
StadtTheater Klagenfurt

JENUFA

Leoš Janáček

Dates: April 18, 20, 22 & 24

Venue: Gaiety Theatre, Dublin

Performance Times: 7.30pm

Co-production with National
Opera Prague and Latvian
National Opera Riga

RTÉ Concert Orchestra and
Opera Ireland Chorus

Booking

Opera Ireland Booking Office

Tel: 01 8721122

Email: info@operaireland.com

Ticket Prices: €16 - €78

€1.00 handling fee for

telephone transactions

Open from: 10.30 am to 5.30 pm

Monday - Friday

Book online:

www.operaireland.com

Gaiety Theatre Box Office

Tel: 01 6771717

Open from: 10.00 am to 7.00 p.m.

Monday - Saturday

Booking fees will apply for

telephone transactions

Tosca

Giacomo Puccini

Sung in Italian with English surtitles

TOSCA	Stefania Spaggiari
CAVARADOSSI	Mario Diaz
SCARPIA	Marcel Vanaud
ANGELOTTI	Stanislav Shvets
SPOLETTA	Roberto Covatta
SACRISTAN	Enzo Di Matteo
SHEPHERD	Sandra Oman
JAILER	Des Capliss
SCIARRONE	Oldřich Kriz

CONDUCTOR	Alexander Anissimov
DIRECTOR	Dietmar Pflegerl
SET DESIGNER	Bernd-Dieter Müller
COSTUME DESIGNER	Annette Zepperitz
LIGHTING	Paul Keogan

Jenufa

Leoš Janáček

Sung in Italian with English surtitles

JENUFA	Franzita Whelan
KOSTELNICKA	Rosalind Plowright
LACA	Ivan Choupenitch
STEVA	Andreas Jaeggli
KAROLKA	Kathleen Tynan
MAYOR	Enzo Di Matteo
FOREMAN	Oldřich Kriz
GRANDMOTHER	Deirdre Cooling Nolan
BARENA	Sylvia O'Brien
JANO	Daire Halpin
AUNT	Joyce Byrne
HERDSWOMAN	Liz Ryan

CONDUCTOR	Laurent Wagner
DIRECTOR	Jiří Nekvasil
ASST DIRECTOR	Stefan Capko
DESIGNER	Daniel Dvořák
LIGHTING	Paul Keogan



Jenůfa: the plot at a glance

The village girl Jenůfa is pregnant by her cousin, the young mill-owner Steva. Steva's stepbrother Laca, who loves Jenůfa himself, is jealous. Steva arrives, under the influence of drink, and insults Jenůfa. The Kostelnicka, who is the girl's foster mother and unaware of the pregnancy, declares that he can't marry until he has remained sober for a year. Laca makes mocking advances to Jenůfa. When she rebuffs him, he slashes her cheek with his knife, then is instantly remorseful. The Kostelnicka, once she finds out about Jenůfa's pregnancy, keeps the girl hidden before and after the child's birth. She tackles Steva about his responsibilities, but he is now engaged to the mayor's daughter, and promises nothing beyond a financial contribution to the child's well-being. Laca still loves Jenůfa. The Kostelnicka, seeing the child as an impediment to marriage between the two, tells him that the baby is dead. After drugging Jenůfa, she takes the infant away, then tells her foster daughter that her baby died while she was delirious. Jenůfa agrees to marry Laca; but on their wedding day a child's corpse is discovered under the river's freshly-melted ice. Jenůfa is accused of murdering her child. But the remorseful Kostelnicka confesses to the crime. Jenůfa assumes that Laca will leave her, but he convinces her that they can find happiness together.

The Slow Birth of a Masterpiece

Janáček had to contend with the personal tragedy of his daughter Olga's protracted death from typhoid, a harrowing experience that explains the opera's poignancy and emotional intensity. As Janáček once wrote: "Jenůfa is tied with the black ribbon of the long illness, pains, and cries of my daughter."



When Gabriela Preissova's play *Her Foster Daughter* was first put on at Prague's National Theatre in November 1890, it was wildly popular with audiences. But the critics gave it scathing reviews and the theatre withdrew the play after only a few performances. Although it had cheerfully embraced the earthy realism of Mascagni's *verismo* opera *Cavalleria rusticana*, it appears that Prague was not quite as ready to accept a play in which the realism was closer to home. It was all right to depict low life in foreign places like Sicily, but not to portray the harsh realities of Czech country life. But Leoš Janáček was impressed. The Moravian-born composer, who was reportedly one of the lucky few to have seen *Her Foster Daughter* before it closed, was taken by the richness and variety of the regional language and culture he saw depicted onstage. Moreover, he heard it in his head as an opera, and a mighty powerful one at that.

He didn't start work on the score until 1894. It was another nine years before it was completed, because he had to fit the composition in between his folksong research and his daytime teaching work. Furthermore, he had to contend with the personal tragedy of his daughter Olga's protracted

death from typhoid, a harrowing experience that explains the opera's poignancy and emotional intensity. As Janáček once wrote: "*Jenůfa* is tied with the black ribbon of the long illness, pains, and cries of my daughter."

Jenůfa was premiered in Brno in 1904 and was well received. But it was another twelve years before it was seen in Prague. The composer Karel Kovařovic, who was director of the capital's National Theatre, had once been on the receiving end of a particularly nasty and sarcastic review by Janáček, and he was a man who neither forgot nor forgave readily. Nevertheless, when *Jenůfa* finally did make its triumphant Prague premiere in 1916, thanks to the tireless advocacy of Janáček's supporters, Kovařovic was fully supportive. He even went to the extent of 'improving' the score by shortening the orchestral interludes and touching up the orchestrations. The Prague premiere was a triumph. Janáček, who had toiled in relative obscurity for much of his life, became an overnight sensation. The opera launched his international career and by the time he died in 1928, this gripping musical and psychological drama had been produced in over 60 opera houses outside Czechoslovakia.



Above: Part of the short-score sketch, in Janáček's own hand, of the opera *Jenůfa*.

Top Left: Janáček sitting at his desk.

Top Right: Janáček's daughter, Olga.

A High Profile Kostelnicka



Rosalind Plowright, who will sing the dramatically challenging role of the Kostelnicka in *Jenůfa*, is one of opera's outstanding artists, renowned as both singer and actress. She has performed in virtually every major opera house and festival, and worked with all the high-profile singers, conductors and directors. Now, having conquered the world's opera stages with her gallery of soprano heroines, she is repeating the exercise in roles from the dramatic mezzo-soprano *Fach*.

Last season she made her New York Metropolitan Opera debut as the Kostelnicka and performed the same role at the Châtelet in Paris. She also appeared as Rosa Mamai in Cilea's *L'arlesiana* for Opera Holland Park in London. Earlier this year, she returned to Covent Garden as the Beggar Woman in Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd*; and later in the year she will make her debut at the Maggio Musicale in Florence and return to Covent Garden

as Fricka in both *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre* with Antonio Pappano conducting.

Rosalind Plowright has an impressive list of operatic recordings to her credit. It includes two of Verdi's Leonoras: the *Il trovatore* one with Domingo, under Giulini; and the *La forza del destino* one with Carreras, under Sinopoli. She has also recorded Verdi's Desdemona opposite the Otello of Charles Craig, and Elizabeth I opposite the Mary Queen of Scots of Janet Baker in Donizetti's *Mary Stuart*, both conducted by Charles Mackerras. For her contribution to the Deutsche Grammophon *Trovatore* recording she won the Prix Fondation Fanny Heldy, (an award given only to one soprano for one recording in any one year). Her other recordings include Julia in Spontini's *La vestale* for Orfeo, Antonia in *Hoffmann* for EMI, and Amneris in *Aida* for Chandos's Opera in English series.

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Top: *Medee*, ROH 1989.

Above: Kostelnicka, Paris 2003.

A Cocktail of Passions

Tosca is the centerpiece of the triptych of operas created by Giacomo Puccini at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries.

*Unlike the bitter-sweet romantic works that flank it, *La Bohème* (1896) and *Madama Butterfly* (1904), *Tosca* is a perfect example of verismo opera.*



Above: Scenes from StadtTheater Klagenfurt and Opera Ireland's forthcoming co-production of *Tosca*.



Tosca is the centerpiece of the triptych of operas created by Giacomo Puccini at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. Unlike the bitter-sweet romantic works that flank it, *La Bohème* (1896) and *Madama Butterfly* (1904), *Tosca* is a perfect example of verismo opera. As it happens, it is one of only two of Puccini's twelve stage works that fall into this down-to-earth and usually violent category – the

other is *Il tabarro*. Because, although he plied his trade during the heyday of the *verismo* movement, the majority of Puccini's operas do not fall into that category.

Tosca is based on Victorien Sardou's 1887 drama of the same name, a play written as a vehicle for the renowned tragedienne Sarah Bernhardt. Puccini first expressed interest in it as a

This intriguing cocktail of passions comes wrapped in Puccini's special brand of dramatically apt music, replete with melodically memorable set pieces and tension-packed ensembles.

possible operatic subject as early as 1889, but it was Bernhardt's performance of the role in Florence in 1895 that finally made up his mind for him. By this time, however, the composing rights had been secured by Alberto Franchetti, and a libretto was being written by Luigi Illica. And Puccini and Franchetti weren't the only ones to see the operatic potential in Sardou's play; the ageing Verdi had cast wistful eyes over it before deciding he was too old to take it on. The murky details of the way Franchetti was manoeuvred into surrendering his rights, thus opening the way for Puccini to proceed, show up various people in a very bad light. Prominent among them are Puccini himself, his and Franchetti's librettist Illica, and the publisher Ricordi. The outcome, though, has given us a superb opera that is undoubtedly the last great operatic masterpiece of the 19th century.

Premiered in January 1900, *Tosca* is a taut and brilliant melodrama in which Puccini's melodic gift and sense of effective theatre are both at their peak. The central love interest, the romance between the prima donna Floria Tosca and her painter lover Mario Cavaradossi, has to cope with political dabbings on his part and jealousy on hers. It culminates in murder and suicide, having taken in, along the way, instances of sadism, attempted rape, and torture. The torture takes place off-stage, admittedly, but its effect is every bit as chilling as if it were taking place before the audience's eyes. And this intriguing cocktail of passions comes wrapped in Puccini's special brand of dramatically apt music, replete with melodically memorable set pieces and tension-packed ensembles.



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Three years ago, she made her Opera Ireland debut as the heroine in an acclaimed production of Janáček's

Katya Kabanova. Since then, Franzita has appeared with the company as Michaëla in Carmen and as Askinya in Shostakovich's Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk and Mrs Foran in Turnage's The Silver Tassie.



Above: Franzita Whelan as Michaëla with Emil Ivanov in Carmen in 2002.

Resuming a Successful Partnership

Franzita Whelan will be resuming a successful partnership with maestro Laurent Wagner when she sings the title role in Janáček's *Jenůfa*. Three years ago, she made her Opera Ireland debut with Wagner as the heroine in an acclaimed production of the same composer's *Katya Kabanova*. In his review in *Opera*, Ian Fox said that her performance 'was convincing and deeply moving'. He also wrote: 'Her sure vocal technique and easy assumption of the Czech text provided her with a triumphant Dublin debut.' Since then, Franzita has appeared with the company as Michaëla in *Carmen* and as Askinya in Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* and Mrs Foran in Turnage's *The Silver Tassie*.

The Portlaoise-born soprano has also sung Pamina in *The Magic Flute*, Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni* and the title role in Beethoven's *Leonore* for Welsh National Opera. She has also appeared as Donna Anna and Gluck's Euridice for Opera Colorado, Mozart's Countess

and Donna Anna for Garsington Opera, and Wagner's Woglinde and Third Norn in the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland's smash-hit concert performances of Wagner's *Ring* cycle under Alexander Anissinov in University Concert Hall Limerick and Symphony Hall Birmingham.

Alongside her opera career, Franzita is also a busy performer on the concert platform. Her oratorio repertoire includes solo parts in major choral works by Verdi, Rossini, Howells, Pergolesi, Vaughan Williams and Mendelssohn. In 2002 she sang and recorded Strauss's Four Last Songs with the NYOI. During the current season she will sing Third Norn in *The Twilight of the Gods* at the re-opened English National Opera and another Beethoven Leonore, the *Fidelio* one this time, in concert performances with the National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland under Gerhardt Markson at the NCH in May. Future plans include Donna Anna in Seattle.

Stefania Spaggiari, who will sing the title role in Tosca, was the winner of last year's Veronica Dunne European Union Singing Competition held at the Helix in Dublin.

Dunne Winner Sings Tosca



Stefania Spaggiari

Stefania Spaggiari, who will sing the title role in *Tosca*, was the winner of last year's Veronica Dunne European Union Singing Competition held at the Helix in Dublin. The Italian soprano graduated in flute and singing from the Conservatoire of Mantova, then continued her studies with Paolo Barbacini and attended masterclasses with Claudio Desderi. She is now studying with Alain Billard. She made her debut as Santuzza in *Cavalleria rusticana* at Teatro Comunale of Treviso. She has also sung Leonora in Verdi's *Trovatore* at Teatro Bellini of Catania; and both the Mother and the Cat in Ravel's *L'enfant et les sortilèges* in Florence. Other roles in her repertoire are Mozart's Countess and Donna Anna, Liu in *Turandot*, Abigail in *Nabucco* and the title role in *Madama Butterfly*. In concert she has sung in Mozart's *Coronation Mass* and *Solemn Vespers* in Reggio Emilia; *Carmina Burana* in Prague; and Rossini's *Petite messe solennelle*. Stefania's future engagements include *Turandot* in Novara and Torino. She will also make her debut in *Aida* in Swetzingen and as Mimì in Korea.



Mario Diaz

The role of the painter Cavaradossi will be sung by the Chilean-born tenor Mario Diaz. Mario's musical education began at the age of seven at the Ferenc Liszt College in Budapest, where he studied the famous Kodály method. He continued his musical education in Stockholm at both the Kulturama Opera Studio 67 and the University College of Opera (Operahögskolan). His teacher is Nicolai Gedda. The mainly spinto roles in Mario's repertoire include Verdi's Duke of Mantua, Manrico, Gustavo, Don Carlo and Radamès; Puccini's Rodolfo, Luigi and Calaf; Cilea's Maurizio; Leoncavallo's Canio; Bizet's Don José; Massenet's Werther; and Walther in Wagner's *Die Meistersinger*. Mario also has an active career as a concert singer in Italy, Spain, Hungary, Germany and Sweden. Since 2002 he has been a member of the Lübeck Opera House.



Marcel Vanaud

Marcel Vanaud, the Scarpia in this production, is an old friend who has already thrilled us with his warm and incisive baritone as Amonasro in *Aida* and Gérard in *Andrea Chenier*. The Belgian singer's repertoire, performed in opera houses all over mainland Europe as well as in North and South America, is an interesting one. Alongside the main French *bariton-Martin* roles, he has sung most of the important Verdi and other Italian baritone parts as well as Wagner's Holländer. He has also sung in the premiere of Manzoni's *Dr Faustus* at La Scala (his debut in 1998), and in Hindemith's *Cardillac*, von Einem's *Dantons Tod* and Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex*. In the near future he will be appearing in *La forza del destino*, *I masnadieri* and *Luisa Miller* in Liege; and *Tosca* in Saint Etienne.



Opera Memories

by Olivia Mitchell TD

I am far from being an opera expert, or indeed even being an opera lover, so it is all the more remarkable that one of my most treasured memories is an opera related one.

The scene of the memory is, of course, Italy. Where else? It is such a civilized country, steeped in history, bathed in sun, and offering incomparable food and wine and music everywhere.

Some years ago my husband and I, and another couple, had enjoyed a wonderful holiday at the Italian lakes and, mindful of the maxim that one should never try to recreate the perfect holiday experience, we were almost reluctant to return to Italy and risk tarnishing a treasured memory. However, in 1999/2000 my daughter had the good fortune to spend a year of her degree course at the University of Pavia. Pavia is well located just south of Milan and she wasted no opportunity to sample Mussolini's excellent train system to visit every monument and painting in all parts of Italy. Her stories and descriptions made all Italy highly desirable, and Tuscany irresistible. When she

condescended to be our guide and interpreter, Siena was chosen, bags were packed and off we went.

Siena as a major commercial power had its hay day from the mid 13th to the mid 14th century. Incredibly, it still exists as a living thriving city exactly as it did then though now, of course, their main industry is tourism.

Even back then however, the city fathers knew they had a good thing and enforced the strictest planning laws to safeguard the beauty and harmony of their vias and piazzas. While modern plumbing and electricity make life a lot more comfortable nowadays, a visit to Siena is still like stepping back in time.

The main piazza, the 13th century Piazza del Campo, is an unusual shell shape, making it a perfect amphitheatre. At the base of the sloping piazza the construction work, of what towards the end of the week transpired to be a full stage, caused great speculation amongst the many tourists that thronged the area every day. Apparently, Tuscan city summers are characterised by having



Top and Right: Images of Siena

Above: Olivia Mitchell TD



opera on tour. A top opera company arrives in a different city each Monday, spends a week constructing a stage, gives one performance and then moves on to the next city. Although the performance was entirely free to the public, I am sure the cost must have been enormous and was probably borne by the participating cities.

The city was also preparing for the annual Palio which was due the following week. The Palio is a bizarre and incredibly dangerous traditional barebacked horse race in which the various districts of Siena compete with each other. Unbelievably the race takes place around the packed Piazza del Campo and injuries are commonplace. This does not dampen enthusiasm however, and districts spend the entire year preparing for the event. An essential element of the event was that each side had a supporting troop of drummers whose role it seemed was to intimidate the other competitors by the severity of their volume and rhythm.

The result of this was that, no matter where you were in the city that week, you were likely to be surprised, at any time, by either a burst of opera or by the ominous roll of drums. All of these sounds combined to bemuse and reinforce the sense of existing in another time.

We learned that our opera was to be Verdi's *La Traviata* and like every other soul in Siena we arranged to eat early in order to be sure of the 'best seats'. As darkness fell, like dozens of giant processions and like moths to a flame, everyone converged on Piazza de Campo. As it transpired, no matter where you sat on the sloping cobblestones, everyone had the 'best seats'. Miraculously, the view and the sound were perfect from every angle. At this remove it is difficult to describe the magical effect of top class singers in a perfect setting on a balmy night in the presence of young and old, rich and poor.

Even then I can remember feeling I should pinch myself to see if it was real. Our incomparably beautiful surroundings were the perfect backdrop to the troubled love story of Violetta and Alfredo. Their meeting, the visit from Alfredo's father Giorgio that caused them to part, and their final brief reconciliation before Violetta's death were played out before an enraptured audience. As the tragic narrative unfolded, the surroundings that had earlier given me so much pleasure were forgotten, as I was totally drawn into Violetta's spell.

La Traviata is, of course, constructed around the character of Violetta. And whilst the love between Violetta and Alfredo ultimately overcomes the social constraints of their day and is victorious, it is a victory that death quickly cuts short. Of those taking part in the production, the one person I clearly recall is Angela Gheorghiu as Violetta. In this role she was not only vocally but also dramatically superb. Opera buffs may debate whether or not Gheorghiu surpasses Maria Callas in the same role, but on that summer evening I could not imagine a more commanding, impressive and beautiful performance.

Finally, if you are tempted by Siena I can recommend our hotel. It was unimpressive from the outside, rather like a tenement actually. But then it was five or six hundred years old! Inside, however, it had all mod cons, but its big surprise was a raised back garden with a breathtaking view over the surrounding Tuscan hills. The perfect location for outdoor dining and the glorious food it served every night made the Palazzo Ravizza, together with Siena and *La Traviata* a treasured memory.

In case you haven't guessed, I loved it all.

Palazzo Ravizza
Email: bureau@palazzoravizza.it

Tuscan city summers are characterised by having opera on tour. A top opera company arrives in a different city each Monday, spends a week constructing a stage, gives one performance and then moves on to the next city. Although the performance was entirely free to the public, I am sure the cost must have been enormous and was probably borne by the participating cities.





New Development Director

My priorities as Development Director will be to ensure that all our supporters are acknowledged and rewarded to the very best of our ability and to guarantee that every donation makes a contribution to the excellence and artistic vibrancy that epitomise Opera Ireland.

Opera Ireland appointed a new Development Director in October of 2003 charged with strategic development and fundraising for Opera Ireland. Nicola Moore comes from a marketing background, having worked with organisations such as PricewaterhouseCoopers, the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants and Smurfit School of Business, UCD. Nicola holds a Bachelor of Civil Law degree from UCD, a Higher Diploma in Marketing Practice from Smurfit School and a first class honours Masters in Business Studies, specialising in Strategic Management and Planning, also from Smurfit School. Nicola has also spent a month on scholarship in Tsinghua University, Beijing, studying International Management.

"Opera Ireland is one of the strongest arts brands in Ireland and is recognised on a European stage - as is evidenced by invitations to perform in Wiesbaden (Germany) and Riga (Latvia).

Crucial to maintaining this position, is the adequate funding of the company and the support - both financial and moral - of our members and corporate partners.

My priorities as Development Director will be to ensure that all our supporters are acknowledged and rewarded to the very best of our ability and to guarantee that every donation makes a contribution to the excellence and artistic vibrancy that

epitomise Opera Ireland. With this in mind we will be introducing new benefits for members in 2004 including group insurance schemes, additional booking lines for members, complimentary interval drinks at partner level, and foundation night tickets at partner level. Our corporate sponsors will now have my undivided attention and I intend to work with them to ensure that they derive maximum benefit from their sponsorship.

Of course any development office worth its salt must also look to cultivate new audiences and new support bases and so we are working on broadcasting opera live into Meeting House Square, and reviving "L'altro Mondo". Catherine Allen, Membership Co-ordinator, is currently putting together a young members scheme which will offer value-for-money membership to the under 25s. 2004 will see a return to full programming - and what a programme! You have heard lots already about *Tosca* and *Jenůfa*, but not only are we fully-staging four complete operas, we will be continuing our Masterclasses and launching the Opera Ireland Travel Club with trips to Prague and Munich. There are so many ways to support Opera Ireland and we are grateful for every cent we receive - it all makes a difference. I look forward to meeting with many of you over the coming year and hope that you will enjoy the 2004 programme!"



Opera Ireland has just introduced a Vhi Group Scheme for its members and their families. Vhi Healthcare offer a wide range of hospital & out-patient plans for as little as 83 cent a day.

Vhi Healthcare and Opera Ireland

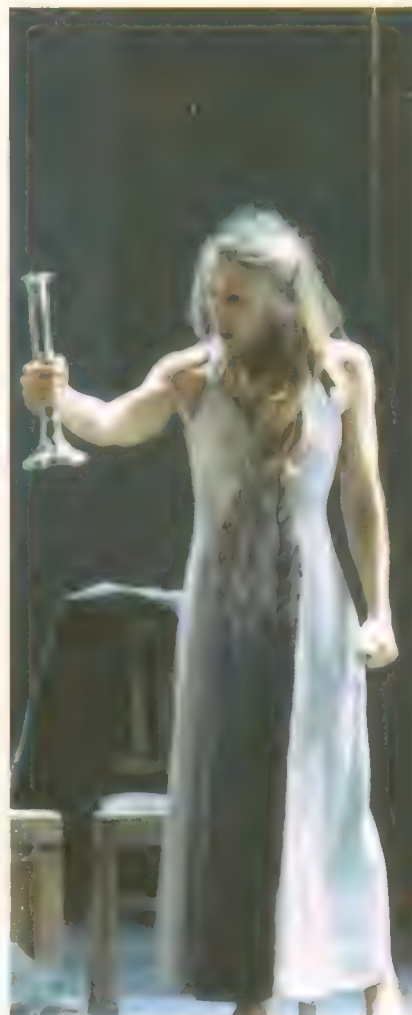
With more than 20,000 people in Ireland currently on public hospital waiting lists, providing access to private healthcare has become a priority for many with around 5,000 new members choosing to join Vhi Healthcare each month.

Opera Ireland has just introduced a Vhi Group Scheme for its members and their families with a 10% Group Discount and various easy payment options. Any new affiliates to the scheme before the end of March 2004 will be entitled to immediate cover, excluding maternity, for any medical condition (*excludes pre existing conditions. Small waiting periods apply to the Vhi out-patient plan*). You can of course join the scheme anytime after this date and still avail of the 10% discount.

Vhi Healthcare offers a wide range of hospital & out-patient plans for as little as 83 cent a day. Vhi Plan B is their most popular level of cover as it

provides access to private treatment in all public hospitals and semi-private access to private hospitals (exc. Mater Private & Blackrock Clinic). Members looking for full cover for access to both the Mater Private & Blackrock Clinic should consider Vhi Plans D or E. You can join this group scheme, which is entirely member funded, by contacting Catherine Allen at 01 4876041 or info@operaireland.com for an information pack.

Joining is easy, no medical reports or questionnaires are required. Existing Vhi or Bupa Ireland members can transfer their insurance to this newly formed group scheme by contacting Vhi Healthcare directly on 1850 44 44 44 with their membership details. Telephone lines are open 8am-8pm Mon-Fri and 9am-2pm on Saturday.



Top: Victoria Kurbatskaya and Veronica Dunne in The Queen of Spades 2002.

Above: Helen Field in Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk 2000.





New Member Benefits

The Opera Circle members are the lifeblood of Opera Ireland, providing essential financial and moral support. This relationship must always be a two-way street with member benefits providing a link with the Company that is both valuable and tangible. The major advantage of membership is the availability of advance ticket booking. Member benefits also now include an additional booking line and a group Vhi scheme with a 10% discount. Plans are also in place for a members-only website and members are entitled to join the Opera Ireland travel club which will be visiting Prague and Munich in 2004. Partners of Opera Ireland, who hold the highest membership option, will now be ensured complimentary tickets to foundation night each season and a complimentary interval reception for their party. The Development Office at Opera Ireland will be working

constantly to improve the offering to our members and will be in touch over the coming months.

Getting the most from your membership

Ten tips to get the best value from your Opera Ireland membership:

1. Send us your e-mail details for regular updates.
2. Join the Opera Ireland travel club – enjoy beautiful opera in another country in great company.
3. Make use of the Opera Ireland group discount scheme with Vhi and save 10%.
4. Complete your booking form the day you get it to ensure best seat allocation and beat the rush for tickets.
5. Take part in Opera Ireland surveys and polls to ensure your views are taken into account
6. Attend the Opera Ireland lecture series – its free to members and most enjoyable.
7. Partners and Patrons who are self-assessed for tax should ensure that they reclaim their tax on membership subscription – contact Catherine on 01 4786041 for details.
8. Consider upgrading your membership if you are self-assessed for tax and not a partner or patron. A small additional subscription might be well worthwhile. It entitles you to complimentary CDs, car parking, programmes and coat check, dress rehearsal tickets and interval receptions for you and your party.
9. Avail of The Merrion Hotel's pre-opera supper offer, exclusive to Opera Ireland ticket holders and make a night of it!
10. Partners - use foundation night as an enjoyable networking opportunity.

Name: _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

Telephone: _____

Please return to:
Development Office,
Opera Ireland
The Schoolhouse,
1 Grantham Street, Dublin 8, Ireland

I would like to upgrade my membership level to:

Patron (€320) ☐ Partner (€950) ☐

Please include me on the members e-mailing list ☐

I enclose a contribution of € _____ ☐

I am interested in making a major contribution ☐

I have included Opera Ireland in my will ☐

Please send me more information on:

Leaving a legacy to Opera Ireland ☐

Corporate sponsorship of Opera Ireland ☐

Giving Membership as a gift ☐



Leaving a Legacy of Opera

There are many ways to support Opera Ireland, both now and in the future. Current financial considerations may mean that you can't give as much as you would wish to Opera Ireland at this point in time. The future of Opera in Ireland may be extremely important to you – so important that you wish to ensure that it is supported even when you are gone. In this case it is possible to include Opera Ireland, as a registered charity, in your will. Such donations make a tremendous difference to Opera Ireland allowing us to give life to initiatives that are simply lacking funding. Very large donations would allow us to dream of a defined home for opera in Ireland – an opera house – and a year-round programme. For more information on legacy giving become a Life-Trust Circle member. *See page 18.*

What your donation will achieve:

- €500 will pay for the printing of tickets for one year.
- €1,000 will fund one promising young student through the Opera Ireland Masterclass series, ensuring the future of Irish opera.
- €3,000 will facilitate the annual updating of the Opera Ireland website, giving the public access to detailed and up-to-date information on opera in Ireland.
- €5,000 will allow Opera Ireland to compile an annual CD of performance highlights showcasing Irish opera talent.
- €10,000 will bring a free live broadcast of an Opera Ireland production to an Open Air venue developing new audiences for opera in Ireland.
- €30,000 will bring a customised production to another European country.
- €50,000 will resource, for one year, a new education and outreach position to develop in young people a love for and understanding of opera.
- €100,000 will fund the production of one complete opera.
- €500,000 will establish a members' opera library with access to books, CDs, videos and DVDs.
- €1,000,000 will launch a fund for the construction of a dedicated opera house for Dublin.

The future of Opera in Ireland may be extremely important to you – so important that you wish to ensure that it is supported even when you are gone.



This summer Opera Ireland Partners, Patrons and Friends will have two opportunities to enjoy a real musical treat in two of the most beautiful cities in Europe



A fabulous new offer exclusive to members of Opera Ireland!

Opera Ireland Travel Club

This summer Opera Ireland Partners, Patrons and Friends will have two opportunities to enjoy a real musical treat in two of the most beautiful cities in Europe. In conjunction with Group Travel International, we have set up the Opera Ireland Travel Club as an opportunity for our members to travel to opera festivals abroad. Prague and Munich are the destinations selected for our exciting summer trips.

The Prague itinerary will include performances of Janáček's *'The Cunning Little Vixen'*. This is a rare chance to see Janáček's melodic animal-world fantasy opera in the composer's native country, during the

year in which the music world is celebrating his 150th anniversary. The trip will also include performances of *'Madama Butterfly'* by Puccini, and Verdi's ever popular *'La traviata'*. In Munich, our tour will include Wagner's mighty comic masterpiece, *'Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg'*, where it was first performed in 1868, and Verdi's *'Don Carlo'* in its full five-act version.

To avail of this wonderful opportunity please contact Catherine Allen on: 01 4786041, or info@operaireland.com, for details. Please note that deposits must be received by booking deadlines.



Above: The Prague National Theatre.

PRAGUE

Monday 31st May - Friday 4th June

1st June	'Madama Butterfly'	National Theatre
2nd June	'The Cunning little Vixen'	National Theatre
3rd June	'La traviata'	National Theatre

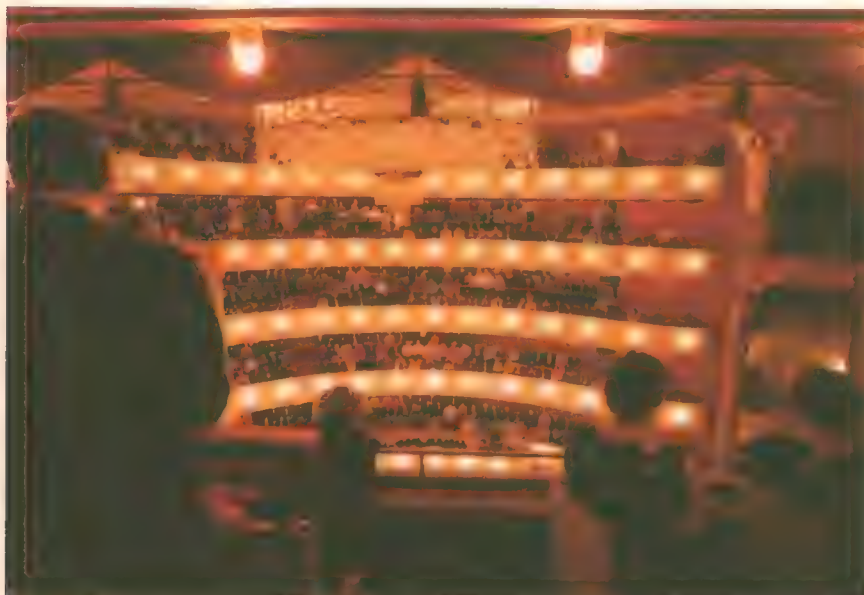
Tour price: €859.00 + government taxes of approx. €35.00

Tickets for three operas in the National Theatre.
Return Aer Lingus flights from Dublin to Prague.
Return coach transfer from airport to hotel.
Four nights in a four star hotel including breakfast.
Guided sightseeing tour on day two.
Fully comprehensive insurance.

Booking deadline March 16th 2004



The Prague itinerary will include performances of Janáček's 'The Cunning Little Vixen'. This is a rare chance to see Janáček's melodic animal-world fantasy opera in the composer's native country, during the year in which the music world is celebrating his 150th anniversary.



MUNICH

Thursday 1st July to Sunday 4th July

2nd July	'Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg'	National Theatre
3rd July	'Don Carlo'	National Theatre

Tour price €689.00 + government taxes of approx €39.00*

Return Aer Lingus flights from Dublin to Munich.
Return coach transfer from Airport to hotel.
Three nights in four star hotel including breakfast.
Guided sightseeing tour of Munich on day one.
Fully comprehensive insurance.

*Opera tickets NOT included in tour price.

'Die Meistersinger' - max €210

'Don Carlo' - max €185

Booking deadline 23rd March 2004


GROUP TRAVEL
INTERNATIONAL

Above: Munich Opera House.



If you believe that the show must go on...

Opera Ireland is dependant on our members and sponsors to ensure a quality and quantity of opera. Your legacy will ensure that Irish audiences continue to experience opera at the highest level.

Help us to honour your memory in a way that is beautiful, emotional, vibrant, and unique.

Every opera performed is exceptional and every opera moves audiences to tears of empathy, joy, awe and love. Opera Ireland is dependant on our members and sponsors to ensure a quality and quantity of opera. Your legacy will ensure that Irish audiences continue to experience opera at the highest level.

As a registered charity, legacy donations to Opera Ireland are tax effective and all donations will be acknowledged in our members magazine.

Those who let us know that they have included us in their wills can become part of our "Life-trust Circle" with immediate benefits*.

For more information please call Nicola on 01 4786041 or e-mail developmentdirector@operaireland.com

*Life-trust Circle membership is free of charge to those who pledge a legacy of €500 or more to Opera Ireland. Life-trust Circle members receive the Opera Ireland Magazine twice yearly, are automatic members of the Opera Ireland travel club, can join the Opera Ireland Vhi scheme (10% discount) and receive free programmes for all Opera Ireland performances.

Above: Nina Rautio and Maurizio Graziani in Andrea Chenier 2002.



Opera at Home

John Allen picks a few winners from recent opera CD lists

Who remembers the good old days? Thirty or forty years ago, say, when hardly a month went by without a plethora of new opera recordings appearing. These were usually of standard repertoire, and invariably featured the high-profile singers of the day – or, at any rate, those who were under contract to the principal labels. Then, the arrival of Compact Discs in the early 1980s brought in a more adventurous choice of repertoire as well as a chance of catching up with some of the sets you might have missed, or couldn't afford first time round.

Things are very different now. The record industry is having a hard time, and mega-cost opera recordings are low on its lists of priorities. Most of the new complete opera sets are coming from the small independent companies, a lot of them recordings made during performances. And there's no harm in that; indeed, some of the most exciting recorded operas around are those captured 'live' in the theatre. But fine-tuned studio efforts, cast from the stellar names of our time, belong to an endangered species.

There are exceptions. EMI have released a new *La Gioconda* (557451-2) in which Violeta Urmana sings a beautifully-voiced heroine opposite Plácido Domingo, sounding like a man half his age. The baritone Lado Atanelli is an exciting new talent, and the idiomatic conductor is Marcello Viotti.

Carmen (557434-2), under Michel Plasseon, features the same company's best-selling conjugal duo Angela Gheorghiu and Roberto Alagna. Both

are in good voice and give committed portrayals of their characters. The down side of this issue is the use of the boring old non-Bizet recitatives rather than the spoken dialogue of the original *opéra comique* format. For that, you might consider the famous 1950 Cluytens set starring Solange Michel on Naxos (8.110238-39).

There is a splendid new recording of Handel's *Giulio Cesare* out on DG's Archiv Produktion (474 210-2). The title role in this sparkling 'live' performance under Mark Minkowski is commandingly sung by the contralto Marijana Mijanovic, and Cleopatra is the interesting Czech mezzo Magdalena Kožená. Anne Sophie von Otter is strongly cast as Sesto and Charlotte Hellekant is a vibrant Cornelia.

Decca continues its exploration of the hitherto unknown, and mostly unperformed, series of English-language operas composed by Isaac Albéniz in the 1890s. The impressive Alessandra Marc, who once created a stir in Wexford, leads an otherwise mainly Spanish cast in *Henry Clifford* (473 937-2) under the direction of Albéniz champion José De Eusebio. The libretto is quaint, to say the least, but the music is warmly romantic and well worth investigating.

On budget-price Naxos, there is a very respectable new set of *Werther*, with Marcus Haddock and Béatrice Uria-Monzon (8.660072/73) as well as two recommendable off-the-beaten-track American operas, Edward Thomas's *Desire Under the Elms* (8. 669001/02) and Samuel Barber's *Vanessa* (8.669140/41).

If there is a dearth of up-to-the-minute recordings of popular repertoire from the big labels, there is no shortage of bargain re-issues from their vaults. The list is long, and I have space for only a few outstanding recent examples of those that have come my way. From Decca there is a very good *Così fan tutte* with Lorengar and Berganza under Solti (473 354-2), a famous *Pelléas et Mélisande* under Ansermet (473 351-2) and an outstanding *Luisa Miller* with Caballé, Pavarotti and Milnes (473 365-2). Deutsche Grammophon has recently re-issued Bernstein's red-hot Vienna *Fidelio* with Janowitz and Kollo (474 420-2) and Haitink's 1996 *Don Carlo* with Margison, Gorchakova and Hvorostovsky (475 252).

EMI's Great Recordings of the Century series is a treasure trove of sterling sets from the heyday of opera recording. And the company has now risen to the challenge of copyright-free re-issues of its early 1950 LP sets emanating from various budget labels. But it may be too late. Naxos in particular has captured a large slice of this market and already has an impressive catalogue of well re-mastered versions of some of these famous recordings. The early EMI Callas, Decca Tebaldi and RCA Björling recordings are already available and there are more on the way. And Naxos has also been quick off the mark in putting out a pair of legendary Bayreuth sets, the 1951 Knappertsbusch *Parsifal* (8.110221/24) and the equally renowned Karajan *Meistersinger* recorded the same year (8.110872-75).

*Why not start your meal
with a glass of champagne
and just notice how the pitch
of the conversation improves!*



Wine Recommendations *from Findlaters*



You don't listen to the same opera all the time, so why stick with the same wine! When next eating out, try something different!

Why not start your meal with a glass of champagne and just notice how the pitch of the conversation improves! A glass of Veuve Clicquot Yellow Label, now available "à la coupe" in many of Dublin's better restaurants, is a perfect aperitif.

Starters usually include fish or chicken - choose a delicate Macon Lugny from top Burgundy producer, Bouchard Pere et Fils. For salads, go for a lightly-oaked Chardonnay, Casillero del Diablo Chardonnay. Light meat/paté starters are fab with South Africa's fruity reds, such as Arniston Bay.

For "mains", complement light fish flavours with a Chablis, but remember, the name is important - look out for William Fevre, recently

elevated to top position in France's Bettane & Dessauve Guide. If you prefer something a little more zesty, go for Sauvignon Blanc - Palliser Estate (NZ) or Neil Ellis Groenekloof (SA).

Beef deserves a robust wine, like Penfolds' top red, Bin 128 Coonawarra Shiraz, or a Bordeaux, such as Lochlann Quinn's wonderful Chateau de Fieuzal. Lamb needs a smoother flavour, something like a Marques de Riscal Rioja Reserva, Ireland's favourite Reserva. Rustic dishes call out for gutsy wines such as Salice Salentino (best is Candido). Game and fowl are enhanced by Pinot Noir - most anything from Bouchard Pere et Fils, would go well, as they are the largest vineyard owner in this precious patch of land.

Thai/Chinese dishes generally merit an aromatic white, for instance, Wynn's Coonawarra Riesling (Aus.) and a



You don't listen to the same opera all the time, so why stick with the same wine! When next eating out, try something different!



fruity full-bodied red: Penfolds Koonunga Hill Shiraz/Cabernet or Kendall-Jackson's spicy Zinfandel would be perfect.

A glass of Quinta do Noval port will accompany your cheese nicely, or be a little more risqué with fruit/sponge desserts and try a sweet champagne (a favourite with Russian Czars!) such as Veuve Clicquot's Demi-Sec.

Alternatively keep it simple with sweet sherry and vanilla ice-cream (try Bodegas Romate PX).

These wines are brought to you by **Findlaters**, voted "Importer of the Year 2004" and are available through restaurants and specialist wine shops.



FOOD & WINE

MAGAZINE

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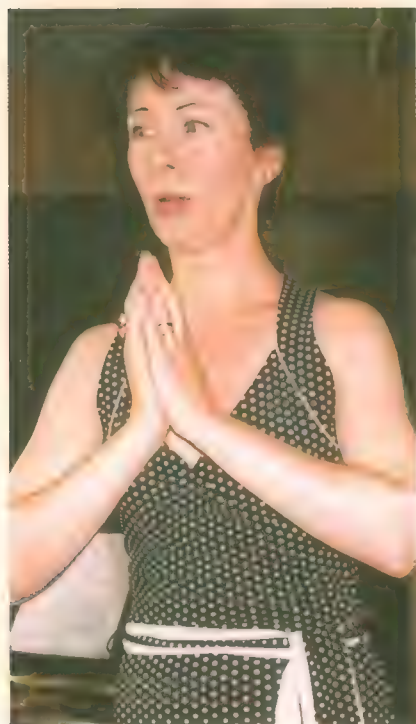


IRELAND'S LEADING
FOOD & DRINK PUBLICATION



*Recollections of my Summer Masterclass with James Bowman
by Liz Ryan*

Masterclass Memories



*We were privileged to be
doing something we loved
with such a wonderful and
experienced tutor.*

I first came across James Bowman in the late 1990s. He was the featured artist on *The South Bank Show*, hosted by Melvyn Bragg. I wasn't long at vocal studies at that time, and was thoroughly fascinated by the counter-tenor voice - which, having no real experience of the classical singing world up to that point, was completely alien to me. He presented a programme of medieval English songs, and I was hooked!

Thus it was that I found myself some six years later as a participant on Opera Ireland's fifth series of vocal masterclasses at the University of Limerick, and their guest artist...why, James Bowman of course!

There were five singers taking part, two sopranos, two mezzo-sopranos and a young counter-tenor. We were requested to bring nine pieces altogether - six arias and three Lieder/songs - which we would sing for James during the course of five days, in order for him to assist us with interpretation, performance and technique. This is standard fare for any

masterclass I've taken part in. However, we got so much more. Despite the fact that he himself specialises in baroque style, and early music composers such as Gluck and Handel (with Benjamin Britten being the modern exception), James was well versed in the legato lines of Mozart, the romance of French art song and the exuberance of Italian opera. He offered valuable interpretative and technical insights on composers which ranged from Richard Strauss to Gounod. But it was in the area of Handel, Gluck and Caccini that we saw the full worth of James Bowman. From time to time he would sing a phrase of music to illustrate a point (we never did manage to coax him into singing a full aria, he said it was our show), and there was that beautiful rich sound, warm and even throughout. In fact he made that very point to a young counter-tenor who was also taking part in the masterclasses, "Take time to develop your voice, focus your chest notes so that they sound smooth and even, and don't hoot on the top!"

Top: Participants in Masterclass series.

Above: Liz Ryan performing at Masterclass concert.

I wasn't long at vocal studies at that time, and was thoroughly fascinated by the counter-tenor voice - which, having no real experience of the classical singing world up to that point was completely alien to me. He presented a programme of medieval English songs, and I was hooked!



One morning towards the end of the week, we were all feeling under par. James noticed this (maybe it was our grey faces), and struck up a questions and answers session on the practical and commercial side of operatic singing. In other words - business! - a topic that is often sidelined in the pursuit of vocal technique. He told us about his experiences including his first lucky break with Benjamin Britten. James was a young singer auditioning for the role of Oberon in Covent Garden. During James' audition, Benjamin Britten, who was on the panel, wrote a note to the others stating "This is the man!" He also revealed that during the course of his successful career he had to go right back to the drawing board because of vocal problems. He was refreshingly candid and funny, and with boyish charm he asked us to remember to take our work seriously, but to take ourselves with a grain of salt. We were all privileged to be doing something we loved with such a wonderful and experienced tutor. Thank you James

Bowman - it was a privilege, and great fun too!

Liz Ryan is co-director of The Drawing Room Opera Co. and performs all over Ireland with the company. She is performing the role of the Herdsman in Opera Ireland's production of JENUFA, this Spring.

"Take time to develop your voice, focus your chest notes so that they sound smooth and even, and don't hoot on the top!"

Above: James Bowman with Liz Ryan

Below: James Bowman relaxing with Masterclass students.



L'altro Mondo Goes to Riga

The Latvian National Opera has invited Opera Ireland to participate in its celebration of Latvia's accession to the European Union. The show, which will form part of a spectacular round-the-clock festival, will be staged on the Balcony Colonnade outside the Opera House on Friday 30 April.



Thousand's of people are expected to enjoy Opera Ireland's multi-media entertainment *L'altro Mondo* in Riga at the end of April. The Latvian National Opera has invited Opera Ireland to participate in its celebration of Latvia's accession to the European Union. The show, which will form part of a spectacular round-the-clock festival, will be staged on the Balcony Colonnade outside the Opera House

on Friday 30 April.

In extending the invitation, Latvian National Opera said: 'This event, which bridges various art forms in time and space, gives us an opportunity to eloquently highlight national traditional and classical forms and values (opera arias) transported into the language and ethos of popular contemporary club dance culture. A more engaging metaphor for old and

"This event, which bridges various art forms in time and space, gives us an opportunity to eloquently highlight national traditional and classical forms and values (opera arias) transported into the language and ethos of popular contemporary club dance culture."



Supported by the Department of Arts,
Sport and Tourism for Ireland 2004
Presidency of the European Union

Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism
AN ROINN EALAÍON, SPÓIRT AGUS TURASÓIREACHTA



new, crossing and eradicating borders, interfacing and including, surprising and simply having fun with music, could hardly be found.'

L'altro Mondo is a performance aimed at building new audiences for opera through an innovative mix of popular operatic excerpts and original contemporary dance/club music. It was created and pioneered by Opera Ireland, using the international DJ

Esoterica, at the Red Box in Dublin in July 2000. The following year, an expanded version was mounted at Meeting House Square in Temple Bar. This outdoor event - a fusion of opera, film, dance and modern dance music - involved six Irish singers, located at various points around the square, assisted by multi-media displays consisting of film projections, dance and performance art.

Participation in this intensive and exciting music programme encourages students to explore opportunities for further study and enjoyment of music.



Reaching Out to Youth



Opera Ireland's 2004 outreach programme will include a joint venture with Youth Opera Theatre in Limerick in July. The programme, which is now in its third year, will be run as part of the 11th annual Summer Music on the Shannon (SMS) music school and festival which offers music students at all levels of achievement, programmes designed to stimulate inherent artistic talent through the development of solo and ensemble performance skills.

Under the direction of opera music consultant, Ingrid Attrot, the three-week long course will include classes in acting and movement as well as set and costume design. Students will be encouraged to explore opportunities for the further study and enjoyment of music. Participants will also rehearse and perform a fully-staged production of an opera suitable for young singers. It will be performed, with orchestra, in University Concert Hall on Monday 2 August. The SMS Youth Opera Theatre programme will commence on Monday 12 July and run for three weeks. Students aged from eight to eighteen will be accepted. Participants in the opera course will

be organised into groups for classes in acting, movement and art (set and costume design and preparation) each day. All SMS opera students will be involved in the production and performance of the opera. The performance, which will be a fully staged production, with orchestra will take place in University Concert hall on Monday 2nd August at 8.00 p.m. Students will also perform choral selections in SMS Festival concerts in University Concert Hall.

No previous singing or acting experience is required and registration will take place between 8.15 and 9.15 am on Monday 12th July at the University Concert Hall on the University of Limerick campus beside the River Shannon. The excellent facilities include a magnificent 1000-seat concert hall, fully-equipped teaching and rehearsal studios, plus student housing, dining and recreation areas, including the spectacular new University Arena with an Olympic-size swimming pool.

Forthcoming Events

Annual Masterclass will be led by ROSALIND PLOWRIGHT



For more than 25 years Rosalind Plowright has been a leading international dramatic soprano. She is amongst a select few to perform at all five of the

world's leading opera houses in Buenos Aires, London, Milan, New York and Paris. She has also sung with all of the "three tenors". The Masterclasses offer young singers training in different aspects of a career in opera.

The sixth annual Opera Ireland Masterclass Series will take place at University of Limerick Campus from 19th - 23rd July 2004.

The masterclass series is held in association with the University Concert Hall, Limerick.

OPERA IRELAND LECTURE SERIES

With RTE Lyric FM Presenter,
John Allen

In association with
THE IRISH TIMES.

The popular monthly series of opera talks will return to their usual venue in the Bank of Ireland Arts Centre, College Green, Dublin on 8th March. Commencing with The Operas of Berlioz, A Centenary Tribute.

All lectures begin at 8.p.m. The full programme for 2004 can be found in our "Dates for your Calendar", which is on the back page.

Come along and learn more about this rich and exciting art form.

RTE lyric fm

PRE - OPERA LECTURES KNOW BEFORE YOU GO!

Pre-opera talks, with John Allen will take place one hour before curtain on week nights during the Opera Ireland Spring Season.



Monday 19th April: TOSCA

Tuesday 20th April: JENUFA

Wednesday 21st April: TOSCA

Thursday 22nd April: JENUFA

All talks are free and are held in the Dress Circle Bar in the Gaiety Theatre at 6.30.p.m.



Opera Ireland

WINTER SEASON

*We are delighted to announce our
Winter 2004 Opera Season:*

RIGOLETTO, Giuseppe Verdi

ORFEO ED EURIDICE, Christoph W Gluck

20th - 28th November 2004

Gaiety Theatre, Dublin

Public booking opens early October 2004

Published by:

Opera Ireland
The Schoolhouse
1 Grantham Street
Dublin 8

Tel: + 353 1 4786041

Fax + 353 1 4786046

Email: info @operaireland.com

www.operaireland.com

The views expressed are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the board and /or management of Opera Ireland.

Produced by: Lisa Irvine
Design: Shadow Graphics
Music Editor: John Allen
Photographs: Patrick Redmond
Tara O'Reilly

Dates for your Calendar

Opera Ireland Events

Schedule of Lectures and Performances

RTE Lyric FM

(Subject to change. Information as known at beginning of February)

MARCH	8	Lecture Series: <i>THE OPERAS OF BERLIOZ</i> – A centenary tribute at 8pm		8	OPERA GOES TO SEA	
				13	DON GIOVANNI live from the Met	
APRIL	5	Lecture Series: <i>TOSCA and JENUFA</i> previews at 8pm		15	THE IRISH CONNECTION	
	15	Dress Rehearsal TOSCA		20	DAS RHEINGOLD live from the Met	
	16	Dress Rehearsal JENUFA		22	THINGS THAT GO BUMP IN THE NIGHT	
	17, 19, 21, 23, 25	TOSCA Performances start at 7.30 pm.		27	SALOME live from the Met	
	18, 20, 22, 24	JENUFA Performances start at 7.30 pm.		29	DO YOU REMEMBER AN INN?	
MAY	1	L'altro Mondo in RIGA		3	DIE WALKURE live from the Met	
	10	Lecture Series: <i>OPERA GOES EAST</i> – Operas with Asian settings at 8pm		5	VOICES OF TODAY	
	21, 22	FIDELIO, Concert in association with RTE. National Concert Hall, 8 p.m.		10	NABUCCO	
				12	MASQUERADE	
				17	SIEGFRIED live from the Met	
JUNE	31 May – 4 June	Opera Ireland Travel Club tour to PRAGUE		19	THE BARD ON SONG	
				24	GOTTERDAMMERUNG live from the Met	
				26	THE DEVIL A DIVO WOULD BE:	
				3	VOICES OF TODAY	
				8	NORMA , Opera Ireland's production from the Gaiety Theatre	
JULY	1-4	Opera Ireland Travel Club tour to MUNICH		10	THE DEMON DRINK	
	19 - 23	Opera Masterclasses with Rosalind Plowright in association with University Concert Hall, Limerick.		15	TOSCA , Opera Ireland's production from the Gaiety Theatre	
	12 July - 2 August	SUMMER MUSIC on the SHANNON: Summer Opera School, University Concert Hall, Limerick		17	GYPSY LIFE	
				22	JENUFA , Opera Ireland's production from the Gaiety Theatre	
				24	GOING PLACES	
AUGUST				31	HOLY ORDERS	
				7	VOICES OF TODAY	
				14	GRAB ME A GONDOLA	
				21	SISTER ACT	
				28	THE OPERAS OF GOUNOD	
SEPTEMBER	6	Lecture Series: <i>POSTMAN'S KNOCK</i> – Great operatic letter scenes at 8pm		5	VOICES OF TODAY	
				12	THE SINGING TUDORS	
				19	ON THE BANKS OF THE NILE	
				26	FAMILY MATTERS	
				2	VOICES OF TODAY	
OCTOBER	11	Lecture Series: <i>SCOTT ON THE OPERA STAGE</i> – Operas based on the novels of Walter Scott at 8pm		9	SMILING DAMNED VILLAINS	
				16	SAY IT WITH FLOWERS	
				23	OFFICERS AND OTHER RANKS	
				30	FROM PAGE TO STAGE	
				6	VOICES OF TODAY	
NOVEMBER	8	Lecture Series: <i>RIGOLETTO & ORFEO ED EURIDICE</i> preview at 8pm		13	OPERA GOES EAST - Operas with Asian settings	
	18	Dress Rehearsal RIGOLETTO		20	THE POLITICAL SCENE	
	19	Dress Rehearsal ORFEO ED EURIDICE		27	WEDDING BELLS	
	20, 24, 26, 28	RIGOLETTO Performances start at 7.30 pm.		4	VOICES OF TODAY	
	21, 23, 25, 27	ORFEO ED EURIDICE Performances start at 7.30 pm.		11	EARNING THE CRUST	
DECEMBER	6	Lecture Series: <i>OPERA FOR CHRISTMAS</i> – A round-up of the year's best opera recordings at 8pm		18	A NIGHT IN VIENNA	
				25	REGULAR ROYALS	

RTE lyric fm

Operascope with John Allen, Mondays at 8pm on
RTE Lyric FM